





VELD TRAILS

(THE OFFICIAL ORGAN OF TRANSVAAL SCOUTING)

Vol. II.

December 1939.

No. 12.

Veld Trails is published on the fifth of every month. Contributions should reach the Editor at P.O. Box 631, Johannesburg, before the 20th of the month previous to Publication.

Editorial Licence.

The highlight of Transvaal Rovering was its Indaba held at Van Ryn Estates during the weekend, 18th and 19th November. About 50 Rovers attended whilst on Sunday morning D/C Whitely and A/D/C Hogg were present.

The camp fire proved a roaring success, thanks to all who contributed to the store of merriment. Tall stories have been heard of before but never so tall as were spun that night. It was a glorious night for sleeping out and the majority of the fellows slept under the "wide and starry sky."

Sunday's activities started in earnest with a short Rovers own after which the first paper of the Indaba was read. This came from Roycroft Crew, Pretoria, and dealt with the always interesting subject of "Leadership". It is hoped that Veld Trails will be able to publish this paper at a later date. After a break for some archery (save the word) Practice the main item of the meeting was put before us in an illuminating manner by D/C Whitely. After explaining the steps that had led up to the proposal for re-organising Rovering in the Transvaal. Mr. Whitely outlined the new scheme. A break was taken for lunch and the afternoon session was devoted mainly to the question of re-organisation. A resolution was proposed by R/S J. Joel and seconded by R/S J. Everett that the Indaba approved of the scheme and undertook to give it every support.

The session ended with a timely paper by St. Andrews on National Emergency and Preparedness.

It is hoped that, as a result of this Indaba, Rovering circles will commence to move as they have never done before. In concluding the thanks and appreciation of the Indaba must be extended to Benoni Crew for the splendid arrangements made by them. The canteen was indeed a success and will, no doubt, become a fixture at all Rover Camps.

Crews will be closing down for a few weeks with the approach of Christmas and I would ask that before doing so subscriptions for Veld Trails be collected. Under no circumstances will Veld Trails be posted unless a renewal of the subscription is forthcoming before 5th January, 1940. Lets have a good effort this year and keep the magazine going, and once more help us with your news flashes and articles.

In closing, the management of Veld Trails wishes to thank all its readers for their support during 1939 and extends to them all the very best wishes for Christmas and the coming year.

A. ROBERTSON.

Associate Editor.

c A CHRISTMAS MESSAGE TO ROVERS IN THE TRANSVAAL 2

Dear Rovers,

Once again Christmas; the annual festival dedicated to the ideal of peace upon earth approaches and once again it falls at a time when a large part of what we are pleased to call the civilized world is engaged in a war in which the weapons are more terrible than ever before and which is fraught with the possibility of greater perils to the maintenance of peace and security than mankind has been faced with at any previous period in its history.

At such a time it is essential for us as members of this great Brotherhood to take stock of our position in an endeavour to realize fully the responsibilities which must be faced by us as Rovers and Citizens of this country. We must put our own minds in order and try to avoid any muddled thinking in regard to the great moral issues at stake; the storm that has burst upon the world must not be allowed to plunge us into despair and we must still cling firmly to our faith that the issue of mankind's struggles will eventually be crowned with unity and peace, even though the goal may seem impossible of attainment, although as Rovers we believe that it will inevitably be reached, mainly as a result of the efforts of enlightened and peace loving individuals in every race who are striving to bring about a better world than their fathers knew.

A nation is comprised of the individuals under its government and as the citizens of a country are gradually taught and persuaded to work more and more for the good of mankind in general and less and less for motives of personal greed and selfish gain, so will the change in the individual outlook be gradually reflected in the national attitude towards the evils which afflict the world. In this regard our duties and responsibilities as Rovers are clarified and defined. The object of Rover training is to develop Happy, Healthy and Useful Citizens and now more than ever before must we strive to preach and carry out in our own lives the great principles of our Movement. Never before have there been more opportunities for Service not only to the Nation, but also to the needy and deserving in our own communities and now is the time for us to prove that we are a credit to our teaching and to the great Movement to which we belong.

In this spirit and with this outlook, I wish you all a cheerful Christmas and with you I look forward to the day when the Scout Law will represent the normal rule of life everywhere.

(Sgd.) R. B. HOGG.

District Commissioner for Rovers.

To put it mildly; Claude is "fed-up". It is not safe to annoy anyone in the T.H.A. and I understand he is already busy calculating the range of some Rover Dens. However he will be pleased to hear that a definite change of front has taken place. Over 50 Rovers have volunteered for the S.A.A.F. R.S.C. Let us wish them "a good reception."

NIM.

Rather than send a message of my own to the Readers of "Veld Trails", I feel that at a time like this, we should once again consider with earnest attention the inspiration and challenge of the words of Lord Baldwin when he addressed the Empire Youth Rally at the Albert Hall on May 18th, 1937. In the course of his address Lord Baldwin said:-

"A responsibility rests upon each one of you whether you like it or not. Upon some of you it is a responsibility for England, for some it is for Scotland, for some Wales, for some Ireland, on some it is for Canada, for some Australia, for some New Zealand, and for some South Africa. Or it may be a colony. In fact, your country and, beyond your country, the Empire, of which we are all constituent parts.

"When I talk of your country I mean all its activities - everything it comprehends - the well-being and contentment of its people, their education, their religion, its professions, its business, its public affairs, the government of village or town or county, the progress of the country, and their Parliament.

"All that is inevitably committed to you, whether you realise it or desire it or not. As the whole is the sum of its parts, and as you are a part, you are bound to have some influence, good or bad. Wherever you live you are bound to have some effect for good or evil on your neighbourhood and on your country. Do your best by it for your own sake and for the sake of your children.

"We are passing. You are the governors of the future. We are passing on to you the duty of guarding and safeguarding what is worthy and worth while in our past, our heritage and our tradition, our honour and all our hopes.

"The torch I would hand to you, and ask you to pass from hand to hand along the pathways of the Empire, is a Christian truth rekindled anew in each ardent generation. Use men as ends and never merely as means; and live for the brotherhood of man, which implies the Fatherhood of God. The brotherhood of man to-day is often denied and derided and called foolishness, but it is in fact one of the foolish things of the world which God has chosen to confound the wise, and the world is confounded by it daily.

"We may evade it, we may deny it; but we shall find no rest for our souls nor will the world until we acknowledge it as the ultimate wisdom."

My Christmas Greetings to all Rover Scouts, and Good Scouting for 1940.

KENNETH FLEISCHER.
Divisional Secretary.

"Cobber, it's up to me and you,
To see that half his dreams come true"

South Africa to-day needs all the patriotism of which her sons and daughters are capable - not only in deed - but also in thought and word. Many young fellows are joining up - others have been called up - and one and all they have, without any selfish thoughts of pleasures lost, rallied to the call.

There are others, who for various reasons, are not yet - or may never be - in a position to do their active bit with the armed forces but they also serve their country well who only stand and wait. Commerce, industries, schools, shipping, transport, must still go on - there must be no hitch - and it is here that those others may play their part with just as much vigour and energy as those on active service.

South Africa has not been touched by war dangers or alarms yet - but we must be prepared to stand ready against whatever may befall. Patriotism of the highest kind will be needed - not the narrow patriotism that recognises no other country but one's own, but the patriotism that carries on silently and steadily towards the triumph of right and justice and decency over nazism and all it stands for.

We must be prepared to do all we can, all we are capable of, in winning this hard and bitter struggle. How long it will last none can say, but rest assured it will not end until the safety and peace of the world is secured.

"Patriotism is not enough", said Nurse Edith Cavell - she knew.
Patriotism is NOT enough!

"ONLOOKER"

END OF A VETERAN

Had the "Royal Oak" had her choice she would have died fighting, her great guns belching defiance at the enemy. But a warrior who is stabbed in the back has no choice - death came to the "Royal Oak" unheralded, unseen, giving her no chance to hit back.

The "Royal Oak" is dead, a proud ship has gone to her last resting place, and with her have gone 800 of her crew. But neither ship nor men shall go unavenged.

Veteran of the last war, the "Royal Oak" was due to be retired as soon as the nine new battleships now under construction were put into commission. These new capital ships will soon be sliding down the slipways, their guns ready to hurl death and destruction at the enemy. And every shell that screams towards its objective will be a reply - a reply from the "Royal Oak" and the 800 men who were denied the chance to answer back.

----- The Prestige of Transvaal Rovering Hangs in the Balance

It Depends on YOU which way it falls!!!

In the November issue of Veld Trails there appeared a brief announcement of four lines to the effect that, as a result of meetings held in Johannesburg, Pretoria and East Rand, it had been decided to drop the scheme for enrolling parties of Rovers for service with the A.C.F. Not only was it decided to drop the scheme, but no alternative was suggested for Rovers to render service in these times.

The resolution adopted at that meeting constitutes the biggest blow the prestige of Rovering in the Transvaal has yet sustained.

At the Transvaal Rovers' Annual Dinner some time ago, the Divisional Commissioner commented that although the number of Rovers in the Transvaal was not as great as it might be, it could always be said in their favour that whenever called upon for any big service, they had responded to the call and done their job well. He was in a position to say that because Transvaal Rovers had never been called upon to perform any really BIG job of service. Any gang of fellows would be willing to turn out and put up a few tents, or cook a few meals, or help pretty girls in the V.M.D. carry fainting females from a street crowd, but when the real call came --- to do something for their country which demanded real self-sacrifice, --- then Transvaal Rovers were found wanting.

It would seem as if the permanent gibe from the Troops to the Crews that "Rovers are nothing but a bunch of talkers" is true. For months and months, in fact since the September crisis last year, Transvaal Rovers have talked in extravagant terms about "service" and "the part Rovers should play in these times". They have called meetings where, over pipe and beer, they have formulated plans for the organisation of a Rover National Service scheme. A scheme has been drawn up, and then proved a complete failure because Transvaal Rovers were too lethargical to fill in the required forms and return them to Headquarters.

Then came the present crisis, in which something a little more concrete than promises of help in times of emergency was required. The cry was for men, trained and willing to render service for their King and Country. Thinking that Rovers would naturally prefer to serve together, the Transvaal Rover Committee

went /

went so far as to make special arrangements with the Officer Commanding the Witwatersrand Command for Rovers to be allowed to join in a body any particular regiment they chose.

The Committee may draw a breath of relief that they did not give the military authorities any definite number of Rovers likely to join up, since the total number of Rover Scouts in the whole of the Transvaal who intimated their willingness to do so did not reach double figures.

The meetings called at various centres were for the purpose of deciding which unit those attending should join, and how soon they should do it. Any one who took the trouble to read the special edition of Veld Trails in November would have known that the meetings were for this purpose, and not for a theoretical discussion as to whether Rovers should join up or not. Instead of this, we got a room full of men, only one of whom had any intention of joining up, who had come along for an evening of their favourite amusement ----- talking and talking and talking about something they would never do.

And when the meeting had decided to drop the proposal to join any regiment en masse, no other constructive suggestion was made for Rover Service. A suggestion was made by the Divisional Secretary to a number of fellows that, if they were conscientious objectors to fighting, they could contribute to the relief of the war by giving one day's salary per month to the Mayors' Food Fund. Even this suggestion was unacceptable --- they could not afford it, although golf, petrol, beer, cigarettes and girls will probably require about a week's salary out of the total amount.

To say that Rovers are not willing to join the A.C.F. now, but will be prepared to do so when an emergency arises, is only to indicate the futility of the arguments the talkers advance. A body of completely untrained men would be more of a hinderance than a help in a time of emergency, and even if some men have had A.C.F. training already, the time taken up in mobilising them, equipping them and brushing up their training would be valuable time wasted.

The truth of the matter is that the great majority of Transvaal Rovers are either too lazy, too selfish or too scared of hard work to take on Active Citizen Force training. It's not as though the Divisional Commissioner had asked them to join the permanent force for the duration of the war (although that is the undoubted duty of those who can do so without too great a prejudice to their families and their jobs). All he asked for was a little of their time for training, or a little of their money for the relief of others.

But "service" is a word which is far easier to discuss than to put into practice.

We repeat what was said at the beginning of this article. The prestige, and the ultimate fate, of Transvaal Rovering is hanging in the balance. We have done a lot of talking, but now the time has come for real action. When we compare what we are prepared to do with the work being done by Rovers overseas, fighting in France, training with the Territorials, for A.R.P., as special policemen, and in a hundred other ways, in addition to paying away nearly half of their incomes in taxes to the Government ----- we should be ashamed to wear the same badge as such men.

It's not too late, although Transvaal Rovers have delayed so long. There are still vacancies for volunteers in most of the A.C.F. units and openings for permanent men in the artillery. Let's see a change of front and a practical

demonstration /

demonstration of our motto, so that at the end of the war, when we take up our work for Rovering where we left it off, we may do so with pride and self respect, knowing that we have men in the Movement who know the meaning of the word "Service".

C. LLEWELLYN COOK.

Associate Editor.

EXPERIMENTAL RE-ORGANISATION OF THE ROVER SECTION.

If the 1938 Indaba at Bronkhurstspruit resulted in nothing else as a consequence than the Re-organisation Scheme, that alone warrants it being termed historic. For years all those in the Transvaal having Rovering at heart have been clamouring for "something to be done about it". Now something is to be done. The scheme has not been arrived at without a tremendous amount of thought and consideration being given to the Rover problem. Every constructive opinion and idea has been carefully considered whether coming from the Transvaal or further afield, and we in this Province feel that we have produced a scheme that will go far toward the solution of our problem.

The details of the scheme will be sent to all crews before the New Year, so that they may make efforts towards putting it into effect as soon as possible. It would be a mistake to imagine that our work in this connection is at an end; to the contrary we have just begun. Our request for something to be done has been met, but now it is up to every one of us to put every ounce we have into the experiment. We look particularly to the Rovers over 21 years, for it is from their ranks that the necessary officers must come. We look to the older Rovers to put the scheme into effect and so prove that the Transvaal is capable of making important contributions to the farthering of Scouting ideals.

ROVERING DURING THE PRESENT CRISIS

Prior to the outbreak of hostilities in Europe the Rover movement was progressing along satisfactory lines. The entire movement was international and mutual fellowship and goodwill existed between all Rovers. In our own particular area, concerts indabas, camps etc., had been organised with a view to bringing the members of the various crews into closer contact with one another.

Suddenly we found our country in the shadow of war. Our thoughts turned to our own changed position. What was likely to become of the Rover movement was foremost in our minds. We all realised the possibility of the members of the various crews being called out for active service either at home or abroad. The question arose as to whether the crews could carry on. How would the scout movement as a whole be affected?

As time passed we realised that there was little likelihood of any immediate change, but the possibility and even probability of an eventual mobilisation had to be considered. Now was the time therefore to prepare for the difficulties which might be brought about by such mobilisation.

That /

That all members of the crew would not be affected simultaneously was obvious. It is probable that some members at any rate will be free for the time being either owing to their belonging to what may be described as the "essential services", or to their being under age or to any of several other reasons. Could these members carry on by themselves?

The remaining members could and should continue amongst themselves. It might be necessary for a small crew or one rendered small by the mobilisation of the majority of its members to amalgamate with one or more other crew for satisfactory working. In the absence of the Rover leader or Rover mate, scribe and etc., these positions should be temporary filled until the return of normal conditions.

Scoutmasters, no less than Rovers, would be called up for service, and the scout movement would therefore probably find itself practically without leaders.

It is suggested that the senior scouts might now be trained to take over the main responsibilities of running their troops, and these rovers still free could also be trained to take over the more responsible duties of the Scoutmasters. Troop leaders and Patrol leaders, especially the senior lads, could be trained in the duties and responsibilities of running a troop. They could be given sufficient scope to prove their capabilities in handling the troop as leaders and organisers.

The Rovers already referred to, with their experience in the crew, could lend invaluable assistance in guiding these lads along the right lines and acting as advisers at all times.

The possibility also exists that cub masters and cub mistresses will be called up or will volunteer for some form of activity which prevents their continuing with the pack; therefore rovers could do invaluable service in taking over the running of these packs for which scouts would probably not have the requisite experience or understanding.

Most of the crews have already taken steps to ensure that all members are not only ready but also capable of performing some useful service in the community.

The national service badge covers a variety of ways in which civic service can be rendered; in particular however, the following special instances are given:-

- 1) Patrol work on the look out for sabotage at points such as the Gas Works, Power Station and Hospitals, etc.
- 2) Civic guard work for the mutual protection of private property, control of crowds, prevention of rioting etc.
- 3) Signalling would be of use in a variety of ways for sending and receiving messages. In modern times this would be particularly applicable to those conversant with morse communications by radio to assist the police, coast guards, etc.
- 4) Assistance could be rendered in branches of first aid work.
- 5) Those Rovers, skilled in drawing or mapping work, could probably be of assistance in collecting and preparing information for use in ordinance maps, town plans etc.

6) /

- 6) Rover craftsman could be usefully employed in repairing camp equipment, army stores, etc.
- 7) Generally in connection with the possibilities set out above, a rover or a crew could be of immense service in acting as secretary or the organising base for any particular activity.

In this country as things are at present, the particular services already referred to may not be possible for some time.

Crews reduced in number, can however, still keep the Rover flag flying by combining amongst themselves to form district crews until such time as the clouds have blown over and the world returned to a state of sanity and sane living.

BE PREPARED

The above paper was presented by St. Andrew's Crew at the Indaba and covers many important phases of Rover Service.

E.D.

.....

Mussolini's envoy has been in Berlin, Hitler's envoy in Moscow, Mr. Chamberlain has had a conference with Daladier. Who is going to come out to be?

Or, putting it another way:

MUSSOLINI
HITLER
CHAMBERLAIN
DALADIER
WHICH WILL
WIN?

Does the third letter from the left, read downwards, give the answer?

.....

Finland is in the news these days. That's the way of present day politics. A country unheard of and little known for years suddenly springs up and becomes of universal importance overnight - such a land is Finland - a Pine-tree covered land, flat for the most part and three times the size of England.

Where the Finns came from no one knows. More than 20,000 years ago a blue-eyed broad-shouldered race came wandering into Europe. Some of them crossed the bleak Russian steppes and the snow-covered carpathians into Hungary, forming the Hungarian nation we know today - others went North over the Gulf of Finland and found this land of a thousand lakes.

Today there are 3,800,000 Finns and they are amongst the toughest fighters in Europe. They need to be for it took them over 700 years to win their freedom. About 100 years after William the Conqueror landed in England, the Pope persuaded the Swedes to launch a crusade to convert the Finns. From that year until 1809, the Swedes were continually fighting the Russians on Finnish soil and not until 1809 did Russia gain full control. Then when the Czarist Empire fell in 1917, the Finns embarked on a civil War. One side, the Whites, was aided by German troops; the other Russians. After 6 months of fierce fighting the Whites were completely victorious. But the Russians have long memories. The extremely strong Finnish fortifications at Helsingfors and on other islands along the Finnish coast were constructed by Russians in pre-war days. The Aland Isles, home of the windjammers", and subject of much recent discussion between the two nations used to belong to Russia. So just as the democratic Czechs were a thorn in Hitler's side, so Finland upsets totalitarian Stalin.

But Finland today stands prepared. Her fine young youth and her older men know what freedom is - and knowing it will defend it against all foes.

MODELS OF BREVITY

Representative Maury Maverich replied to a five page attack by a constituent:

"Dear Sir: Ph - f - f - ft.

"Yours very truly."

Sir Herbert Beerbohm Tree to a would-be dramatist:

"My dear Sir: I have read your play. Oh, my dear Sir!

"Yours faithfully."

Bernard Shaw one day received an invitation from a celebrity hunter:

"Lady X will be at home Thursday between four and six."

The Author returned the card; underneath he had written:

"Mr. Bernard Shaw likewise."

SECOND TUREFOUNTIN (St. John's)

With the approach of final examinations and of more intensive military activity the crew has had to bid a temporary adieu to a number of very active members. These departures have shifted the burdens of scribe and treasurer to new shoulders in the crew who are now gaining valuable experience in the difficulties and intricacies involved in debt and thought collecting.

If only Hitler could have foreseen the far-reaching effects his militarism would have.

The crew is feverishly preparing itself amid a swelter of argument, opposition and assistance for its Dingaans Day Dance. We should like to see all our Rover friends at this function.

Although at the moment we are unable to assist in the running of Veld Trails we hope that in the future if ever any assistance is needed to raise money for its support we may be able to help. Under no circumstances must this magazine fail.

GOOD COMPANIONS CREW.

A short while ago, the crew made the trip to the distant end of the Magaliesburg, and did a climb which took over two hours. They cooked up a few things on the top-----why they troubled to light fires is not known, the sun that day would have burnt 'most anything. Having "hung by the eyelid" on more than one occasion on the way up, an easy descent was found for the afternoon. In the morning thirty three vultures were counted, but these ugly creatures had increased to well over one hundred when the crew returned. It was an amazing sight to see so many huge birds and their young soaring. The heavens seemed to be full of hoars/ croaks. When home, brother vied with brother in the telling of the deed done that day.

A week later our R.L. fell on his head at another place on the same long koppie. Why he didn't break his neck nobody can explain---he just got concussed and walked and talked himself to hospital. He appears to be none the worse for his stay in Pretoria (somewhere north) and we hope he will have no after affects. May we use one of his own expressions here: "Onkruit vergaan nie!" anyway a remarkable escape, and welcome back to life.

At a weekend camp fire last month, Whitey was ushered into the fold and congratulated by all. After a few lusty songs and coffee we curled up on our grass mattresses. The following day we determined to hike all over King's Kloof to make sure we had the best camp-site. We struck up one stream and followed it almost to its source, then cut across country to contact the other stream which we found the more interesting--- a series of small falls and bathing pools. The water was icy cold --- We eventually got back to our camping place fairly tired and very pleased that kit inspection in the morning had left the site clean and tidy. King's Kloof is a good spot for a camp.

Our /

Our visit to the Central Fire Station was very interesting and we learnt a lot, and owe a great deal to the enthusiasm of our fireman guide.

Our condolences go out to Bellevue Crew in their loss. We also have lost a few pounds worth in the same way.

What about a cricket date Turffontein, St. John's?

Rosebank, where art thou?

2nd CROWN MINES CREW:

As stated previously, our ordinary meetings have been adjourned, and all members are now actively engaged in running or assisting with troops and packs.

On October 7th, Shakes and Vic. spent a very enjoyable week-end assisting with a Patrol Competition Camp run by Far East Rand at Heidelberg.

The crew attended a Church Parade on 22nd October at Mayfair Presbyterian Church. A good number of district scouters also attended. After the service the crew acted as hosts to the scouters. at the Den.

An excellent show in spite of rain, proved to be the Western Districts L/L Dance on November 3rd. A good time was had by all.

Crown Mines send best wishes to all other crews for the coming year.

ST. ANDREW'S CREW.

Still keeping on carrying on and taking on temporary (at present) positions as officers to help pull the troop and pack through in the event of mobilisation of any of the officers - otherwise nothing else to say except Merry Christmas and Happy New Year to all - even to our R/L.

ARCADIA CREW.

Arcadia Crew are spending a good deal of their time training the Troop to run itself as well as the Pack - just in case. Greetings for 1940.

BENONI CREW.

In the midst of the military hub-bub at present disturbing the fair rest of this little dorp, the crew find time to have an odd spot of crew meeting and tea. Nothing startling to report but we would like to know who said: "Time flies you can't they fly too fast?" No prizes offered but Oh! Gosh! and Oh! Gee! does it puzzle the writer. Salaams and all that sort of thing for the jollifications in the offing.

"Isms" Defined.

- SOCIALISM: You have two cows; you give one to a neighbour.
- COMMUNISM: You have two cows. You give both to the Government. Government gives milk to some one else.
- FASCISM: You have two cows. You keep the cows and give the milk to the Government. Government sells part of the milk back to you.
- NAZISM: You have two cows. Government shoots you, takes the cows, declares them non-aryan, burns your stables and collects the insurance.
- AMERICAN NEW IDEALISM: You have two cows. Government shoots one, milks the other, throws milk down sewer.
- CAPITALISM: You have two cows. You sell one and buy a bull.
-

HONOURABLE BANANA

That English ideas and idioms are full of pitfalls for the Eastern mind is shown in the following quotation from the thesis of a student of English in Tokio. The subject is the "Honourable Banana."

"The banana are great fruit. He are constructed in the same architectural style as sausage, different being skin of sausage are habitually consumed, while it is not advisable to eat wrappings of banana. The bananas are held aloft while consuming, sausage are usually left in reclining position. Sausage depend for creation on human beings or stuffing machine, while banana are pristine product of honourable Mother Nature. In case of sausage, both conclusions are attached to other sausage; banana, on other hands, are attached one end to stem and opposite termination entirely loose. Finally, banana are strictly of vegetable kingdom, while affiliation of sausage often undecided."

